

TALON

Positively Avila



MAY
2010

WHO
IS
Mitchell
Russell?

In Her Shoes Danielle Higgs

By Colleen Reagan

Waking up at 5:45 in the morning, off to the hospital from 6:45 to 4:00, then straight to soccer practice from 4:00 to 6:00. Finally, home and starting on homework. She looks at the clock and it's midnight. Where did the day go? This is a typical day in the shoes of Danielle Higgs, for the past two years.

Danielle Higgs is a senior, graduating this May with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She is very involved at Avila University, including being a full-time student in the school of nursing. Danielle, also known as Dee, has been a four-year starter for the Avila Women's Soccer team, as well as being captain of the women's team for the past two years. Dee is also an Avila Student Ambassador and a member of Avila Student Nurses Organization.

Being a nurse has been a dream of Danielle's since she was a little girl. Danielle's little brother Zack Higgs, freshman here at Avila University, majoring in Radiological Science, was born with Hyperparathyroidism and was in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at St. Louis Children's Hospital for five and half months after he was born. She would visit him at least two times a day while he was in the hospital. Danielle noticed that a very young age that it was not the doctors giving Zack the direct care to get him healthy enough to go home, it was the nurses.

Danielle quotes, "Everyday I would bring my Water Baby with me to see Zack and the nurses would show me what they were doing to Zack on my Water Baby. From seeing the personal attention they gave Zack and the compassion they put into his care made me want to be a nurse at a very young age."

During the visits to the Hospital, Danielle and her family became family to the nursing staff in the NICU. Danielle would even wear her 'Nurse in Training' scrub to visit her brother. Whenever someone would ask Danielle what she wanted to be when she grew up she would always state, "I want to be a nurse and work in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at St. Louis Children's Hospital, where my journey to become a nurse started."

Growing up Danielle participated in many things that would lead her to becoming a nurse. She was part of Nursing Explorer through a local hospital in St. Louis; she shadowed many nurses in different areas of the hospital and now works as a Student Nurse at Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis.

Danielle chose Avila University after a long journey of looking at colleges to attend. She has played soccer since she was three years old and was not ready to hang up the cleats after high school, however she had talked to many coaches and they repeatedly told her that playing soccer and going to nursing school would be IMPOSSIBLE to do.



One night during her senior year of high school, while up studying, she got a call from Megan Easterday, an Avila Alumni who graduated in 2007 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, as well as, a former captain of the Women's Soccer Team. Megan had talked with Danielle about how it is possible to go through nursing school and play soccer in college. This was an answer to all of Danielle's prayers; she could finally play soccer while studying for her dream. Danielle visited Avila the next week and signed her letter of intent later in the week.....

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An Era Ends Brian Witt Graduates

By Trey Swager

Avila Student

Avila has faculty members that have been here for years as well as the first year professors. Just alike we have a very wide range of students on campus, some coming from different parts of the world and some could see our campus from the front yard they grew up in. Some come and go within a single semester but some seem to linger around. Nobody seems to figure out how long he or she has been here, what's taking them twenty something semesters to graduate, or even know the outline to their story in this life as an Avila student. Senior football player and history major Brian Witt has been a familiar face around this campus for 6 years now and is known by a large number of the staff and student body.

Brian was born in Stony Brook Long Island New York and that is where he resided until the age of twelve when he made the move down to the sunny shores of south Florida. He lived in a suburb of Palm Beach in a town called Jupiter where he landed his first kiss during a dare in the fifth grade on the playground back at his old stomping grounds Jared Thomas Elementary with a lucky lady by the name of Coral "We used to call her Coral Reef" Brian says as he recalls the story. Brian continued on to Jupiter High School where he played basketball and football for the Warriors. He was a very successful athlete in high school starting in both sports and more or less dominating every time he was told to compete. After the senior season of basketball he was then forced to start making decisions that would impact his future. He heard about some little NAIA school out in Kansas City Missouri through a friend that went up the year before from his high



school. He took a recruiting trip out to the Midwest and found that it wasn't too horrible in the show me state. After weighing out the options he had to decide where he would be for the next four years of his life (which has turned into a few more than four at this point). So after deciding he liked Avila, he wanted to play football, and he finally realized he was over vertically challenged to have a shot at college basketball career he became an eagle.

Coming in as a freshman not knowing anyone in this entire region he was forced to make friends fast. Those friends ended up having a very strong bond with Brian and would even-

tually be the reason he is still walking our halls today. There was a surplus of running backs on the team that fall of 2004 season which is the position Brian played his first four years here so after his assistance was not needed on the game field that year. After taking his red shirt that year Brian went home claiming "money was tight, and my parents were struggling because they didn't give out good scholarships that year" so while having financial problems both at school and home he went back home to Florida and worked during his second year to give his parents some assistance. That didn't last very long because he couldn't be without football and his "boys" any longer than that one year so he was right back at Avila playing football once again the next year. Battling with numerous concussions and running out of eligibility he missed out on his season during his fourth year here but was able to get back on the field and play out his final year of football and it was well worth it for him as he stated "Beating Doane last year was my most memorable moment since I have been at Avila because we have never been very good and we got a good win in a bowl game."

Come May 15th Brian Witt will be done with Avila for good. He plans on moving on to coach high school football and mold the young men he encounters into great football players as well as outstanding members of society. He is unsure where he will reside but he plans to go anywhere he can begin his career so when the opportunity arises he will be there ready to go. Brian is widely liked around campus and in the Kansas City area; his presence will be greatly missed in our hallways as well as in our athletic program.

Playing. Chief To. Eagle Kevin Porter By Jessica Morrow

Kevin Porter is one of the newest members of the Eagle family. He has an extensive background in coaching, playing, and everything that involves the sport of football, which makes him an awesome asset to the program here at Avila.

Originally from Warner Robins, Ga., Porter attended Auburn University on a full football scholarship, as a starter on defense all four years and was named second team All American. He was drafted in 1988 in the third round of the NFL draft and played for six years with the Kansas City Chiefs and the New York Jets as a cornerback and safety. He also coached in the Arena Football League as an assistant as well as the head coach of our own Kansas City Brigade.

Porter most recently was on the coaching staff at Mid-America Nazarene which is known to be a football powerhouse in the NAIA division. However, there is much more to Coach Porter than just a strong football background. When I sat down with him I found that he is very culturally diverse and even a huge movie buff. "My wife and I try to go see a movie every weekend," says Porter. Some of his favorites are Schindler's List and All The President's Men. Coach also filled me in on a little more personal info. You may not expect some of these things from a man with his hard exterior that you see when he's working hard coaching the team.

JM: How long have you been married?

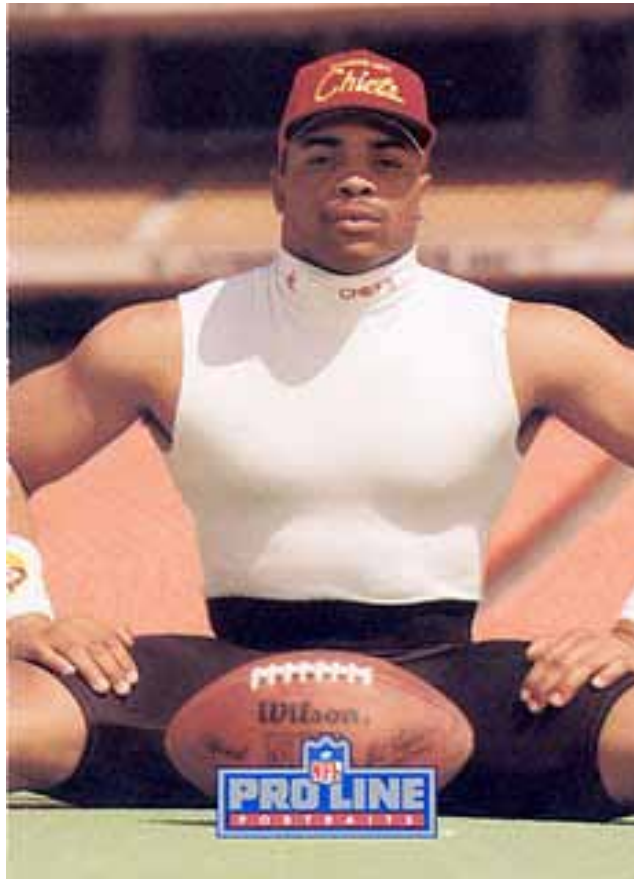
KP: 18 years

JM: What is the reasoning behind you coming to Avila?

KP: I like to be apart of start up projects and I see potential in the program.

JM: What are your hopes for this year besides trying to have a winning season?

KP: To get Avila on the level of competing in our conference and nationally. If they can get past that hump then the winning will take care of itself.



JM: You have played on many different teams throughout your career. Tell me which one was your favorite...

KP: I really liked playing Kansas City. I was drafted to the Chiefs and played for some great coaches and with some great players.

JM: Who has had the greatest influence in your life thus far?

KP: My high school coach. He not only taught me a lot about football and prepared me to play on the college level but, also prepared me for life in a lot of ways.

JM: As a child, did you always know you wanted to be involved in sports on the pro level?

KP: I have always gotten a lot of attention in football while in high school and then into college too. I was a business major in college though and if I weren't a player and now a coach I would be in politics.

JM: If you could live in any other time, when might that be?

KP: I would have liked to live in the 1960's. It was a time of change and I would have like to be there for the civil rights and women's rights movements.

JM: You have lived and worked in so many places, so which was your favorite?

KP: I lived in London for about 6 months and I really loved that!

JM: What one word would you use to describe yourself?

KP: Elevated.

JM: What one word would your friends use to describe you?

KP: Determined

JM: What are you most proud of?

KP: That I have been married to the same woman for 18 years and that we have two beautiful children.

JM: What's the one thing about you few people know?

KP: That my wife and I love to go to the movies, we try to go every weekend!

JM: What do you like most about your job?

KP: I like the opportunity to have an impact.

JM: What do like most about Avila in general? What needs a little work?

KP: I love the people here, from top to bottom. It's just a great place and the people are great. I would like to work on our fan base at not only Avila football games but, for all sports. We need to have that "crazed fan mentality".

The spring football game was on April 17th and the team was looking great especially the defense. The players have been working hard in off season all semester and next year look to be promising. Things are changing for the Avila Eagles football team. There are new offices that have already been built in the gym and there is even talk of a new athletic field. I saw the huge drawing plan of the turf area and asked Coach Porter when they were planning to put in the new fields. He responded "There are no plans yet for sure, but at least we have a drawing."

Mitchell "Red" Russell

Who really is Mitchell Russell? When asking many students around campus, who "Mitchell Russell" is, almost more than half of them had no idea. Mitchell is a thirty-six year old college student from San Diego, California. Everyone knows him as "Red." He considers his name to be Red Russell and nothing different. "My name is just a name. The football team knows my name, it's not a secret. It doesn't define me or who I am though," says Red. He got his name "Red" from his red dog tag that he received in the Army. After asking many students why they think his name is Red they thought it was because of his Red hair. Red says, "I was the only one with the red dog tag. The drills sergeant would pick on anything that made you different from everyone else and mine was my red dog tag." He has had this name since he was seventeen years old.

When he was seventeen years old he joined the army. He grew up with six other siblings, three brothers and three sisters. "My mother would be the person I admire the most because she had to put up with me in life, she raised seven children with no father figure, she has been a nurse for thirty years, and she keeps putting people in front of her needs and wants," says Red. In his family the first son is required to join the army, but he was not the first son. "I was the third male in my family, but my one older brother overdosed when he was fourteen years old and my other older brother worked on the farm," says Red. By his older brothers not joining it made him want to take the role of the son that joins the Army.

Red being in the Army has changed his aspect on life. Red says, "I miss being in the army because I have done it more than half of my adult life. I miss the structure, the comradeship, and just the routine. I liked the feeling of me doing something worthwhile and that means something. I would go back in a heartbeat, but I can't because I have been given a medical discharge to leave." So since Red cannot go back to the Army he wanted to go to a University that had a great nursing program. He searched many schools, but Avila was the best fit for him. Red would like to get his nursing degree in emergency medicine. He would like to get involved overseas to help people and soldiers in war with battle injuries, wounds, and other traumas. "Me not accomplishing things in life that I want to accomplish would be my biggest fear," says Red.

Along with him going to Avila to get his nursing degree he is part of the football program. All through elementary, middle, and high school he has been involved in sports. Sports are important to him and he does not want to

As a Tip of Ice.

Red of the

Real World

By Emilee Bickleman



lose that in his life. Red says, "Being a part of the football team allows me to stay around the sports." Red is the equipment manager for the football team. Coach Porters says, "He is the hardest worker and helps the team out with all of the football equipment." Along with him being a part of the football team, he tries to come to every sport event that is held at Avila.

Many people around this school see Red a lot. He tries to get involved with events that Avila has and he tries to treat everyone with respect by saying hello. Many people see him with his headphones on listening to his music blaring or smoking a cigarette. "Music is the only thing in life that makes sense to me. That is why I am always listening to my music," says Red. He notices many things at that school than others do. Since he is older than most of the student body, he notices how he used to act. When he was younger he made the same choices that most college students make and thought the adults did not know what they were talking about. "A life lesson that I have learned through everything that I have been through would be that the adults really aren't that dumb. They actually have had life experiences and sitting back watching Avila students makes me realize this," says Red. One thing that he says that Avila students should know would be "that is time to be adults and decide what you want in life." He regrets that it has taken him this long in life to figure out what he really wanted in life.

So next time you see Red say hello and talk to him. He is a lot different than people expect him to be. He has gone through life with a lot of different experiences that most of us have not or will not go through. He has a great story and excellent stories to tell. "My motto I live by is it's not how hard you can hit, it's how hard you can be hit and keep moving forward," says Red.



The Bransen Ireland Road to Nashville

By Emilee Bicklerman

Bransen Ireland might be a typical sophomore at Avila University, but he has some tricks up his sleeve. Until this semester he was back-up quarterback and wide receiver for the football team. Bransen says, "Leaving the football team was a hard decision, but I know that I made the right choice." He enjoys being with his family and friends. "My parents, brother, and Jacob Zinn are my biggest supporters because they are there for everything and invest a lot of energy, time, and money." He has a positive attitude about life and stays to himself most of this time, but he likes to have a good time.

On Saturday night, March 6th, he spent his night playing at Wild Bills located at the Legends. He sang and played his guitar for two hours, along with Garry Lincoln. He had a special guest sing with him to the song "Big Green Tractor." The special guest was his little Beau Ireland, who is seven years old. Beau is a big part of Bransen's life. Beau is starting to get interested in singing along the side of his brother. "The more experience I get from this will open more doors for my little brother. He is getting a first-hand look on what could happen to him," says Bransen.

Bransen has been singing his whole life. He was involved in choir until he went to high school. He never started playing the guitar until the end of his freshman year, which was May of 2009. Before he came to Avila he played football at Ottawa where he got introduced to guitar playing. "There was a guy I went to school with at Ottawa that played the guitar and he got me into wanting to attempt to play the guitar," says Bransen.



Bransen writes all of his songs from past experiences or from someone or something that has inspired him. He wrote a song named "Way Too Fast" about a guy he went to high school with that died in a car accident. All of his songs mean a lot to him and they tell a story. Matt Decker, a freshman, says, "Bransen's songs at the **** because they fit him and he tells a story in them." His roommate from last year, Trey Swagger, a sophomore, has heard him from the beginning. He says, "I'm glad he has gotten better because when he first started playing he sucked, but now he's the man." So, through all of Bransen's practicing and hard work it is starting to pay off.

Bransen is now performing in front of larger crowds and getting a lot more publicity than he was before. Shawna Westphal says, "Bransen is going to become super rich and famous with his music!" He will be performing at the Power and Light District on some Thursday and Sunday nights, which will help get his name out to fans. He will also be playing in Springfield and at Wild Bills again. With all of his upcoming live performances, he will be spending a lot of time practicing. He will also be getting ready to perform in a showcase in Nashville this summer. Amelia Aubuchon, a freshman, says, "Bransen will be successful in his future because he is a good entertainer and very enjoyable to watch." If you would like to check out more about Bransen and listen to his music go to www.youtube.com/user/BransenIrelandMusic.

Jake Zinn

Avila Junior, Jake Zinn, is definitely one of a kind in more ways than one. Jake will be one of only a few seniors on the Avila Football Team for the 2010 season, playing the position of kicker. Throughout the school year Jake has devoted hours upon hours to the football team, constantly improving his skills.

Jake is dedicated and devoted to his school work. He is majoring in business with a minor in public relations. He would like to eventually find a job in the music industry after graduation. His dream would be to move to Los Angeles or Nashville to kick off his career. Right now, he is a step in the right direction toward his career dream in two ways, as being the manager and representative for Bransen Ireland and working for a radio station in Kansas City.

Jake is the representative for Bransen Ireland, an Avila student who recently started singing and performing. He coordinates Bransen's appearances, shows and day-to-day life.

If you ever listen to The Alternative 96.5 the Buzz in the morning you will most likely hear Jake's voice. He is the morning show producer for Aventura's Big Fat Morning Buzz. Here really enjoys both of these jobs, because "it doesn't really seem like work. Every day is fun and I get to meet so many cool people," Zinn says. Although, he has set high standards for himself upon graduation, he understands that dreams don't always go as planned. If Jake is unable to make his big entrance into the music world right after graduation he would like to continue his education by pursuing a master's degree in recording arts. Even though Jake stays busy

For the Benjamin Sharp

by Jacqueline Sharp



majority of the time with school and work he always has a positive attitude and outlook on life and he never fails to crack a joke.

He has quite the sarcastic sense of humor. When asked for a quote that he follows in life he responded "Pimpin' aint easy!" After taking on all of his responsibilities during the week, in Jake's free time he enjoys doing anything that involves music or art.

He loves going to concerts and his job at 96.5 the Buzz allows him to attend several a year. Jake is originally from Pleasant Hill, Missouri so, he is somewhat familiar with the Kansas City area, but loves exploring and finding new hotspots. Going out with friends, watching sports (especially the LA Lakers) and traveling are just a few of Jake's favorite things.

Jake is one of the hardest working, well rounded, and accomplished college students around with big dreams and taking all the right steps to reach them.

Teaching Is Part of My Life

By Cheng Chung

Bruce Inwards

Bruce Inwards is the Director of International student services at Avila University. He takes on the task of receiving international students from all over the world and providing them with a stable environment so they may be successful at their university. Many foreign students, who travel abroad, find themselves in situations of isolation and feelings of being homesick. Mr. Inwards addresses these issues along with structuring events that allow foreign students new cultural exploration. As the world becomes globalized, so to must the people in order to maintain a peaceful world.

In college, Mr. Inwards majored in education and teaching English as a second language. This major provided him with the necessary tools needed to begin his interest in teaching not only native, but also foreign students. Once he began seeing his goal to have a more enriched multicultural sense within himself, did he begin traveling the world. It would be this goal which sparked his overall primary goals which would improve the experience in school with international students and give American students an opportunity to know the many different cultures.

From the majority of students in America who go to college, it's somewhat rare to find one who wishes to devote themselves to an international goal. Most students are very home oriented and while they may travel outside their home country; ultimately wish to stay in America. For Bruce Inwards, he fits in this rare category as he made it his goal to become an international student. Not only traveling to other countries, but learning about them and living and working in these foreign countries also.

Mr. Inwards traveled to fifty three countries in his entire life. This gave him a masterful understanding to the fact that there exist different points of views and ways of thinking. This is a lesson he would like to bring to American students. Mr. Inwards also taught in foreign universities such as Harbin Normal University in China as well as teaching in Israel. Today he works at Johnson County Community College, the University of Missouri Kansas City, and has been at Avila University for twenty years. Through these experiences Mr. Inwards has found his most difficult struggle to belong, flights and recruiting trips. Nevertheless, Inwards has faced these struggles and continues to further his life goals.

Mr. Inwards believes that through cultural exploration in language, travel or just becoming friends with foreigners may provide an individual with a different perspective on life than their own. It also introduces the individual to different ways of thinking and lifestyles. This knowledge is very important in the world today as it becomes globally affected due to connections through technology, travel, business and most other aspects of life. For foreign students alike, he aims to improve the English as a second language course to give foreign students the same experience of cross cultural learning. By enhancing the quality



of this course, Mr. Inwards will be successfully building cultural bridges that have long since divided the entire world.

Besides all the travel and cultural experience, Mr. Inwards wishes to retire in America. He says this is where his family is and this is after all his home country. The task that Mr. Inwards is taking on is one that must be maintained. Even though he is just one person, he is doing a lot for his cause. There are also many other people from around the world who have an interest in exploring the cultures of other people. In many ways the knowing of others may increase the understanding among nations. These misunderstandings have been what has left the world in shambles. Through understanding, individuals may learn to work together instead of against each other.

Great Teacher

McCalley

Dr. Sue Women

By Rachel Kloser

Dr. Sue Ellen McCalley, born in Richmond, Missouri on May 5, 1952 is an education professor here at Avila. She has been here for the last seventeen years, but she never intended on staying this long. She came to Avila after being injured by a student she worked with. She only planned to be here for two to three years, but she fell in love with the University and the people there within. Dr. McCalley had every intention of going back to the classroom with her young students after she worked here for those few years. But, as fate would have it, she stayed and has had a great impact on so many of her students.

Dr. McCalley grew up in the small town of Richmond, Missouri, where everyone knew everyone and she and her siblings were "raised by a village," as the saying goes. She has two sisters and one brother and loving, intelligent parents. She began teaching at the age of 22 after graduating with her B.S. in Elementary Education from Northwest University. She then went on to gain her Masters Degree from UMKC in Special Education and Learning Disabilities. Finally, she attended University of Kansas to obtain her Ph.D. in Emotional Disturbance, Counseling Psychology, Educational Psychology and Research. Along with her long list of Universities attended, she also has a long list of teaching experience. She taught preschool for one semester, followed by second grade for one semester, and then she taught first through third grade for seven years at Grace Episcopal Day School in Alexandria, Virginia. After

that, she moved on to a Residential Treatment Center where she taught second through sixth grade for another seven years. Next, she moved on to UMKC Graduate School of Special Education where she taught for two years, and then she came here, to Avila, and has been here for the past seventeen years.

Dr. McCalley has overcome many difficulties in her life and career. Her most recently known feat would be overcoming the sudden, unexpected death of her beloved husband, Chuck. She took only a short time to mourn, and she has bounced back amazingly from her loss. She came back to her classroom and went back to teaching her students the same as she always has; she is a truly amazing woman and it's no wonder she is a great role model for so many people.

Anyone who has had Dr. McCalley as a professor knows her sometimes silly catch phrases and her other-worldly ability to make teaching anything, and everything, fun. Dr. McCalley, herself, admits that in class, she overuses "Are you with me? Do you understand?" She also states that she tends to speak in superlatives, even when unnecessary.

When confronted with questions from the Proust Questionnaire, she had many wonderful answers. For example, when asked to name a living person whom she despises most, she answered with "anyone that harms children or animals." Another

Proust question she was asked was, "what is a talent you would like to have?" She answered, "I used to be a fairly accomplished pianist (I could play all of Beethoven's Sonatas). After starting work here at Avila, I haven't had the time to practice that I need to keep my technique. I would love to restore that talent." When asked what her favorite word is, Dr. McCalley laughed and explained that she loves words; that there are so many words that are just fun to say "like bioflavonoid," but she says that her favorite word would have to be "compassion." Finally, her greatest fear, she says, "is to die before I'm ready, which is different from dying unprepared."....

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Embellishing Your Story

Debbie Thornton

By Theresa Kuppinger



One thing many people don't know about Debbie Thornton, assistant to the dean, is that she collects cookie jars. She has nearly ninety cookie jars, some on display throughout her home in the kitchen, and many in her craft room. When in need of a escape from the chaos and stress of daily life, Debbie steps foot into this mini haven of hers. She uses crafting as a pick-me-up, as well as a way to earn a little extra money on the side.

As a resident on campus, it is difficult to pass too much time at Avila University without stepping into the Student Life office in the Marian Centre to see a tall desk that nearly hides the glowing smile behind it. Debbie Thornton, affectionately known as Ms. Debbie, is nothing short of a "second mom" on campus. "From the first time I see you as a freshman to the time you graduate, I watch the transition. I love it. College can either make or break a student, and nine times out of ten, when they graduate, they know exactly what they want to do."

Debbie's passion is in scrapbooking: telling a story with pictures. Her goal is "to be able to archive pictures where generations forever will be able to enjoy them rather than look at them through boxes." Debbie has taught many students how to scrapbook. "I love to do it because I love to show off the picture. That's the first thing I teach. I make sure that the picture is the most important thing on that page." The most important element of scrapbooking is to tell a story. Debbie made a scrapbook for her sister throughout an extended stay in the hospital and her struggle to regain her health. Now the scrapbook sits on display on the coffee table in her sister's

home for all to see. "I like it when people get excited: they get to see their pictures in a whole new venue." Debbie says people have no idea that their pictures could look so great.

While Ms. Debbie loves to embellish the lives of her loved ones in books that she spends months creating, she has quit the story of her own. Ms. Debbie married her husband at the ripe age of 18. She met Bob on a trip to date, and although she was a little wary of his age, she convinced her parents that this 24-year-old gentleman was only 19. It was not until a fishing trip with her father that Bob confessed his age. Debbie was

grounded, but was still allowed to date Bob, as he was such a gentleman.

Thornton had no idea she would end up working in an education environment. Debbie went to school for medical billing, which is exactly what she did for the beginning of her career. However, she took a disliking to her job when medical insurance companies began to take more control. Debbie took a break to become a letter carrier for seven years. Although she loved everything about the new job (besides a couple dog attacks), Debbie had to return to medical billing due to issues with her knees. She found that she hated how the government and medical insurance companies had taken control, so she decided to go in a different direction.

After an initial interview over the phone, Debbie Thornton stepped foot into Avila's Barefoot room. Her expectations were soon shattered when she was informed that "the others" would soon arrive. Thornton expected nothing more than a one-on-one interview, which turned into an interview by nearly the entire administrative board. Thornton had no time to panic. "I thought: I'll either do really poorly, or really well." With around 60 applicants for the job, and only a handful interviewed, Debbie Thornton was a perfect fit for the job.

Debbie has learned so much throughout her five years spent at Avila. She has seen students grow from the first time they step on campus and hug their parents good-bye, to the time they walk across the stage at graduation. Witnessing that growth is her favorite part of her job. Debbie enjoys spending time with the students. "One time," she says, "some of the students challenged me to a ping pong tournament. Thinking three or four would show up, I bought five pizzas and soda, thinking I'd have so much leftover. Somehow the theater got wind of it, and here comes everybody. I played ping pong till I could no longer play anymore, it was so much fun." Debbie loves it when students invite her into their lives. For her, it is an invitation to come witness a part of your story, which is an honor in her eyes.



By Conor Riley

Sarah A Friend To All And Never Forgotten

Boone

One of the most stressful and overwhelming things to do in life is start a new school. A school where you may know very few people or not one person, but with goals and ambitions in life people do this to guide themselves to a better future. A better future at Avila University as a school that works through the community and allows students an opportunity to make a difference in the world. With this being said meet Sarah Boone a transfer student this year that knows hardly anyone and is more than willing to make a difference in the world. Sarah Boone started her Avila journey after attending Rockhurst University at which she said was a great decision; she said "if I hadn't of left I wouldn't receive the education I need for the degree I've dreamt of my whole life". This dream Sarah has wanted is to become an elementary teacher and she feels like Avila University gives the best opportunity for a successful career in elementary education.

Sarah Boone has grown up in the Kansas City area went to Our Lady of Peace grade school, and Archbishop O'Hara high school. She has always been outgoing making friends has never been a difficult thing for her to achieve. She has always tried new things even golf at which she enjoyed, but needless to say not her best sport. She spent most of her working days as a lifeguard at Grandview pool; swimming is one of her favorite activities. She has always enjoyed reading books and spending time with friends including little animals preferably puppies. Sarah is the person who goes all out especially at royal games where spotting her isn't hard. Sarah Boone has always enjoyed meeting new people and as soon as she came to Avila University decided it would be best to join Campus Ministry which reaches out to everyone of all faiths to build unity within the



Avila community. Sarah Boone mentioned "Campus Ministry was a good decision in meeting new people at a new school and also a way to get to understand Avila University a little more".

Walking around out in the newly warm sun talking about life she began to explain what life is all about for her. She explained everything as if it was poetry to her and it came out so easy. "I am the girl who enjoys diving off cliffs with my best friends and always screams, 'Let's

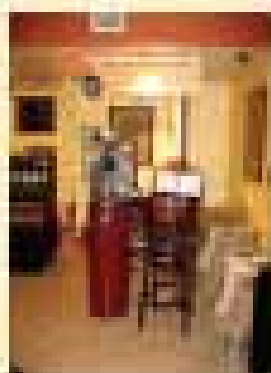
do it again!' I am the girl who has bad hair days, says the wrong things, and runs into doors on a daily basis; but still laughs my way through the day. I am the girl who is glad to have a thousand flaws because perfection just doesn't seem to be exciting enough. I am the girl who has big dreams, high standards, & a list of things I'd like to accomplish. I am the girl who wants to dance till I grow weak, sing till I lose my voice and love like I can never get hurt. I want to take chances, become vulnerable, and live like it's my last day. I want to feel pain, the adrenaline, and have near death experiences every day, just to know that I'm still alive. I want to test my limits, break the boundaries, and see the world outside the box. I want to spend my waking hours making my days as random and spontaneous as I can without any sign of a routine. I want the world to start looking past the imperfections and appreciating the beautiful things in life that are normally left unnoticed. I want to bring a smile to your face, even if it's just for a second. I want to be able to be young, make mistakes, and be able to laugh at them afterwards. I want to meet everyone, knowing I can learn something from each and every one of them. I want my friends and family to know that their happiness is my number one priority and that they can come to me for anything. But most importantly, during those last seconds before I die I want to know I lived for something or someone." This is Sarah's Poetry what she feels so compassionate about. Next time a while walking around Avila University if running into Sarah Boone you'll be surprised that she'll always say hello even if she doesn't know you.

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